



Parent Handbook
Hamilton Reformed Preschool

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Introductory Information

History. Lakeshore Little People's Place (LLPP) is a Christian non-profit (501(c)(3) ministry. In 1993 a group of community members contacted the Holland Deacons' Conference (HDC) about the need for Christian childcare. The HDC is a coalition of area Christian Reformed churches working together to meet the needs in the community. After exploring many options, it was decided that the community's childcare needs could be met by partnering with churches to provide Christian childcare within the community.

In 1997 LLPP began with twenty preschool children at Maplewood Reformed Church. Within the first year our program grew steadily and by August of 1997 we were able to open two additional centers. LLPP now has four locations in the Holland area.

- Harderwyk LLPP is on the north side of Holland and cares for Infants through Kindergarten.
- Providence LLPP is on the south side of Holland and cares for Infants through fifth grade children.
- Hamilton LLPP is a preschool only site for children between the ages of three and five.
- Hamilton South LLPP cares for Infants through fifth grade children and offers a tuition paid and free state-funded preschool program.

Philosophy. We believe that children need support in order to develop spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, socially and physically. We want children to be able to:

- Develop ways to express themselves through language, music and art
- Develop independence, self-control, social skills and motor skills through a variety of activities
- Develop positive self esteem
- Develop relationships with other children and caring adults

We believe that parents and families also need support. Lakeshore Little People's Place seeks to create an environment where parents can feel comfortable and secure leaving their children. We work in partnership with parents and invite parent communication and participation.

We believe that our faith should shape the way that we care for children. Since our God is a God of all creation, our children are involved in many things, from painting and singing to counting and speaking – all of which show evidence of our Creator. In addition, there are activities that specifically show that our faith is evident: prayer at meals, Bible stories, memory verses, religious songs and the celebration of religious holidays. Whether specifically referenced or not, our faith in a loving God informs all of the activities that we engage in.

Mission Statement. Lakeshore Little People's Place is a ministry of the Holland Deacons' Conference which provides Christian childcare to meet the needs of working parents in the greater Holland area. The program offers:

- Quality, licensed, educational full time childcare for ages 6 weeks to 6 years
- Before and after school recreation activity and study time - licensed for kindergarten through grade five.
- A caring community of professional care givers
- Intentional inclusion of children from low income families who are working toward self-sufficiency
- A church community for families who do not have a church home or who need more support than LLPP can provide

Non-Profit Organization. As a non-profit 501 (c) (3), LLPP uses all of its income for the purpose of operating and improving and expanding its programs. The Internal Revenue Service has given exempt status to LLPP. Despite the obvious benefit of being exempt from most tax fees, it also allows donors to receive a charitable contribution deduction on their income tax return.

Statement of Faith. LLPP employees and board members are asked to sign a statement that they accept and agree with this Statement of Faith:

- I believe God is the creator and sovereign ruler of all things in the universe.
- I believe in Jesus Christ as the only true Son of God who became man.
- I believe He died and carried away all our sins, He arose and now He reigns in heaven with His Father.
- I believe God sends His Holy Spirit to comfort us and aid us in a life of Christian discipleship.
- I acknowledge my sinful nature, my salvation through Jesus Christ alone, and I am committed to a Christian lifestyle as an expression of my repentance and gratitude.

LLPP Board of Directors. Lakeshore Little People's Place is governed by a Board of Directors which includes one representative for each LLPP site, one representative from the HDC, and 5 other members. Board members are approved by the Holland Deacons' Conference and meet on a monthly basis. It is the job of the board to set and review policy/procedures, financial information, and receive updates on the monthly functions of LLPP. The board is also comprised of several subcommittees that meet as needed. These committees include: The Human Resource Committee, Tuition Assistance Committee, Finance and Long Range Planning. The Executive Director and Office Manager submit monthly reports and attend board meetings.

Licensing Regulations. Lakeshore Little People's Place is licensed by the Michigan Department of Human Services: Office of Children and Adult Licensing. Each facility is assigned a Licensing Consultant who ensures the centers follow the "Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers" set forth by the Department of Consumer & Industry Services: Bureau of Regulatory Services. A copy of these rules is available on the parent table along with a licensing notebook where parents can review documentation of the renewal/interim inspection reports, as well as, any documentation on special investigations. A license is granted for a two year period and requires a full licensing inspection to renew. Every year the Licensing Consultant will also conduct an unannounced visit to further ensure all licensing rules are being followed by checking paperwork files and observing classrooms. In addition, the Licensing Consultant must approve any changes such as new classrooms or transportation and investigate any incidents reported by staff, parents, children or local authorities. LLPP is also inspected by and must meet regulations set in place by the Department of Environmental Health and Fire Safety.

The Holland Deacons' Conference and LLPP. The Holland Deacons' Conference (HDC) is the diaconal ministry of the Christian Reformed Church for Classis Holland. HDC carries out the calling from Jesus Christ - to show love and mercy, actively working in the community using God-given talents and gifts. The HDC combines the resources and visions of the Holland Classis churches to do what one church alone would not be able to do. LLPP intentionally partners with the HDC and local churches in order to foster Christian community and relationships that can provide services LLPP would not be able to offer on its own. LLPP is a non-profit corporation organized on a membership basis with the Holland Deacons' Conference being the sole member. The Holland Deacons' Conference has representation on the LLPP board and approves all LLPP board members. Joint meetings are held yearly with LLPP and the HDC.

Partnerships and Collaborations. LLPP partners with several organizations in our community to aid in providing appropriate comprehensive services and ensuring high quality care. LLPP has membership on the Great Start Collaborative, Great Start Collaborative Early Care and Education Committee, Great Start Readiness Collaborative and Administrative Committees, Ready for School and the Lakeshore Association for the Education of Young Children. LLPP also works closely with the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District and local school districts. Participation in these organizations allows LLPP to work for the development of a common community philosophy for early childhood. The sharing of information on available community services allows a comprehensive, seamless system of services for all children and families.

Admission and Withdrawal

Admission. Lakeshore Little People's Place admits children without regard to race, color, nationality, or religious background. Openings are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, although children who are siblings of a child in our care are given priority. All required forms must be completed and signed before a child may attend the program. Parents must agree to keep all information updated as necessary.

Enrollment. Parents will complete an enrollment application form and pay the non-refundable registration fee (when a space is available for your child). The Parent Handbook, Health Care Service Plan, and Crisis Intervention Plan can be accessed at llpp.org or a paper copy can be requested. Parents will also receive an enrollment packet containing the following required forms:

- Health Form / Immunization Record signed by a physician
- Child Information Card – updated yearly or with any change
- Personal Information Form
- Parent/Agency Agreement
- Parent Providing Food Agreement

Hours of Operation. Preschool care is available during three sessions: Monday/Wednesday/Friday a.m., Tuesday/Thursday a.m. and Monday/Wednesday/Friday p.m.

The Preschool will follow the Hamilton Community Schools (HCS) calendar and will **not** operate on any days HCS are closed due to Holidays, scheduled days off, snow days and fog delays.

Arrival and Pick-up. Each child must be signed in upon arrival. Sign-in sheets are located by the door of the classroom. Parents should walk a child into the classroom and alert the teacher to an arrival or departure. This is also a good time to talk to the staff about how your child is feeling. Children who arrive by school bus or LLPP transportation will be signed in by the classroom teacher.

All children must be signed out when they are picked up. Children will be released only to parents or persons authorized by parents and listed on the Child Information Card. If you intend for someone not listed on the information card to pick up your child, notify the staff in writing. In emergencies, you may call the site. ID will be required at pick up.

If a parent, by court order, is not allowed to pick up his or her child, a copy of the Court Order must be provided to LLPP and the child may be released only according to the court order on file. If the court order is not on file, either parent may pick up the child regardless of what the other parent has communicated.

Late Pick-up Policy. Parents are expected to promptly pick up their child after the preschool session. There will be a \$20 fee assessed for late pick up and dis-enrollment may occur after excessive late pick-ups.

Withdrawal. Two week written notice to the Site Director is required to withdraw a child from the program. If a two-week notice of withdrawal is not given, your account will be billed for the two weeks. The Site Director or Executive Director of Lakeshore Little People's Place may request withdrawal of a child from the program for the following reasons:

- For non-payment of fees
- For excessive late pick-ups (more than two in a three month period)
- If a child endangers the health or safety of staff or other children
- If the director, in consultation with the staff, determines Lakeshore Little People's Place is unable to meet the needs of a child and/or a parent
- If conferences between the director and parents do not satisfactorily resolve inappropriate behavior
- If a parent does not provide the center with required paperwork concerning their child or refuses to abide by other licensing requirements
- If a parent behaves inappropriately in front of other parents, staff, or children

Financial Information

Payment Information. A non-refundable registration fee of \$40 is due to secure your child's spot. A discount of 10% off the lowest tuition is given to families having two or more children.

Tuition is based on the days you enroll your child for, not the actual time the child attends. Parents are responsible for tuition payment on all scheduled days whether your child is in attendance or not. Parents will not receive a weekly bill but will receive monthly statements reflecting charges and payments. Statements may be requested weekly or bi-weekly, if desired.

Tuition payments are due by the semester or weekly on the first day of the week that your child attends. A late fee of \$15.00 per week will be charged if payment is not received by Thursday at 3:00 p.m. Nonpayment or partial payment for two consecutive weeks may result in dismissal. A \$25 fee is charged for a returned check.

Methods of Payment. LLPP accepts checks, cash or Money Orders. LLPP also offers parents the option to enroll for direct payment (ACH payment). ACH payments are electronic payments that are created when the parent gives LLPP the authorization to debit directly from their checking or saving account for tuition payment. Families may request these payments to be withdrawn weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. Those interested in this payment option must fill out the Authorization Agreement for Direct Payment included in the enrollment packet. Direct payments are processed on Wednesdays.

Billing Concerns. Questions regarding billing for the Hamilton site should be directed to the corporate office at (616) 399-9149 or email llpp.office@gmail.com.

Tuition Assistance. LLPP believes that children should have access to quality childcare and strives to make childcare affordable for families. The following forms of child care assistance are available for those families that qualify:

- **State Assistance.** LLPP is an eligible provider of childcare assistance through the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS). Full tuition payments are due weekly for childcare until an authorization notice from the state is received by LLPP. Depending on income, DHS will pay a percentage of an hourly DHS Rate that is set for childcare. Families are expected to pay the difference between the DHS payment and the actual LLPP charge for tuition. Families may qualify for Michigan's Child Development and Care Program if they meet income requirements and need child care for:
 - Family preservation
 - High school completion
 - Participation in an approved activity
 - Employment

To determine eligibility and complete an application, visit www.michigan.gov/dhs and select the parent resource tab. If a parent qualifies, a weekly parent co-pay will be determined based on the anticipated reimbursement from the state.

- **LLPP Tuition Assistance.** Any family needing financial assistance for tuition payments is encouraged to apply for the LLPP Tuition Assistance program. All applications are reviewed by a committee which awards a weekly assistance amount based on income and expenses in relationship to childcare expenses. The amount of assistance given typically ranges from ten to thirty percent of weekly tuition costs, which makes quality childcare more affordable. Families may also apply if they typically have enough income to cover childcare expenses but have a special circumstance such as unemployment or medical circumstances. Funding for the LLPP tuition assistance fund comes largely from donations from area churches and the Holland Deacons' Conference. Ask your Site Director for a LLPP Tuition Assistance Application or download the application at llpp.org.
- **Ready for School.** Scholarships for preschool age children may be available. Please see your Site Director for more information and an application.

Inclusion

Special Needs. LLPP promotes inclusive practice when enrolling children with special needs and strives to provide appropriate learning opportunities for all children regardless of disability. In accordance with the MDE Early Childhood Standards of Quality, the curriculum is designed to provide an appropriate environment and adult guidance to enable the participation of children with special needs. Staff members working with special needs children will concentrate on the following five areas: early identification and early intervention, inclusive education, physical environment, partnerships with parents and multi-agency collaboration.

Early Identification and Early Intervention. Ages and Stages assessments are completed in conjunction with daily observations of children's play and progress for early identification of any special needs. Parents are also able to complete their own assessment for their child online through the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District by visiting www.oaisd.org and selecting special education needs/education and scrolling down to parent resources. Children with an identified special need will be linked to area services that can aid families in understanding the resources available to them (see Multi-agency Collaboration below for details).

Inclusion. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) entitles children with special needs to have access to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LRE means that young children with disabilities should receive services in typical community-based early childhood settings and programs whenever possible, and only go to more restrictive or specialized settings when their individual needs require it.

Children with special needs and disabilities are fully integrated with other children in each aspect of the daily routine whenever possible. Activities and experiences are planned to raise children's awareness of special needs and disability in a positive way within the classroom.

Physical Environment. Reasonable adaptations and arrangements are made so that children with special needs and disabilities can be included in all the indoor and outdoor play areas. Physical classroom space is arranged for supported and/or independent movement including easy access to toilet and eating areas. Respectful privacy is arranged for children with special needs at times of specific medical care at parent or child's request.

Partnership with Parents. Parents are encouraged to work closely with all staff to support their child's individual needs including discussions of child's progress and continued need. Parents are included and engaged in all communications regarding graduated procedures of intervention with local agencies and care providers. Parents are also consulted regarding information that should be shared with other agencies or individuals involved in care. Parent's perspectives on the care of their child with special needs are respected.

Multi-Agency Collaboration. The Site Director will serve as a liaison between the parents and other agencies. In each local school district, as well as the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District (OAISD), there is a person who is designated as the Project Find Coordinator. In most cases, this person is the director of special education services. This individual can assist with identification of special needs and guiding families to the appropriate educational services within the school district.

For children ages 3-26 years: Contact the special education office in your local school district to find out who the Project Find Coordinator is for your district. This information can also be found on the OAISD website at www.oaisd.org/oaisd/aboutus/localschools/.

For children ages 0 through 2 years: Contact the OAISD which has a program called Early On that takes the lead for children 0 through 2 years of age that may be experiencing any type of developmental delay. Early On in Ottawa County may be reached by calling (877) 702-8600 ext 4663. Or for more information, you may view the OAISD Early On website at www.oaisd.org/oaisd/departments/earlychildhood/earlyon/.

Cultural Competence Policy. Lakeshore Little People's Place strives to create an environment in which all cultures and ethnic backgrounds are embraced and valued. Employees are trained in topics related to cultural competence and inclusive practices on an annual basis. Cultural competence comprises four components: (a) Awareness of one's own cultural worldview, (b) Attitude towards cultural differences, (c) Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and (d) Cross-cultural skills. Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_competence). LLPP aspires to meet the above components through embracing cultural differences, expanding cultural knowledge, and striving to meet the culturally unique needs of all families.

Child Health and Safety

Child Health Policy. A green Health Appraisal form containing an immunization record and documentation of a physical exam signed by a physician must be on file with LLPP. The green Health Appraisal form must be on file at the time of enrollment and then updated annually for children under 2 ½ and every two years for children over 2 ½. Parents of school-age children can sign a Physical Exam Waiver form stating that their child is in good health and that their immunizations are up to date.

It is the policy of LLPP to notify the parents as soon as possible when changes in the child's health are observed. This will allow parents to give additional input on a child's condition and be involved in decision making regarding the child's care. Indicators of changes in a child's health are:

- Fever of or over 100 degrees
- Diarrhea - two or more loose/watery stool without known cause (by teachers or staff)
Exception: Medication or new food reaction (call parents to confirm)
- Vomiting - any vomiting
Exception: Babies that "burp up" following a feeding (consult parents for history)
- Unknown skin rash as these are often symptoms of communicable disease
Exception: Parent does not need to be notified of mild diaper rash that is already known to the parent. Rashes due to allergies or known medical conditions should be treated as instructed by parent and a notification call must be made with each episode.
- Irritability, lethargy, persistent crying that is not typical for the child
- Difficulty breathing

If a child becomes too ill to participate comfortably in activities or they need more care than the staff can provide, the child will be temporarily separated from other children and sent home as soon as possible. Parents are expected to pick up ill children within an hour of notification. Parents should notify the Site Director if a child in care has been diagnosed with a communicable and infectious disease. The Site Director will then post a Health Alert visible to all parents and report to the County Health Department if necessary. See the Health Care Service Plan for a list of communicable and infectious diseases.

Return of Children to Childcare after Illness. If a child is too ill to participate in the regular activities of the classroom they should not return to care. Antibiotics must be administered for a 24-hour period and the child must be fever free for 24 hours prior to the child returning to the center. An exception to this is if a doctor's note is provided stating they can return to care. If a child has a communicable illness, the guidelines set in place by the Ottawa or Allegan County Health Department will be followed regarding how long a child should be excluded from care. LLPP reserves the right to request a doctor's note before allowing a child to return.

Child Incident/Accident. In case of injuries, the incident is logged and Child Incident/Accident Report is completed. In case of serious injuries, Staff will follow the guidelines for Accident or Injury (emergent) as listed in the Health Care Service Plan. All staff is trained in CPR and First Aid and AED. Until the arrival of the parent, a physician, an ambulance or paramedics, the child's teacher or Site Director will make decisions regarding care of the child. LLPP is not responsible for medical bills incurred because of accident or injury while a child is in attendance. All serious injuries requiring medical attention are required to be reported to the Office of Children and Adult Licensing. **Please report any phone number changes on your Child Information Card** so that you can be reached in an emergency.

Emergency Procedures. LLPP has written procedures for emergency situations including fire, tornado, serious accident/injury and man-made disasters, as well as a crisis management plan. Emergency procedures and evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. For detailed instructions on specific emergency procedures, please see the Crisis Intervention Plan.

Child Abuse/Neglect. We are required by law to report suspected incidents of child abuse/ neglect. Detailed information regarding this is available in the Crisis Intervention Plan and parent handouts are available in the Site Director's office. Community services are available to families seeking help or intervention. Please see the Site Director or consult the Health Care Service Plan for a list of resources.

Child Discipline Policy. Staff will use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. Discipline is most effective when it is consistent, reinforces desired behavior and offers natural and logical consequences. Discipline helps children gain control over their behavior. Children act best when they know the rules and know they are expected to follow them. Positive methods of discipline create a constructive and supportive social group and reduce incidents of aggression. Positive discipline methods will help guide a child toward self-discipline and independence.

This is encouraged by the following methods:

- Planning ahead to prevent problems
- Setting consistent/clear rules
- Encouraging appropriate behavior
- Relating the discipline method to the behavior
- Talking to the child about the feelings he/she is having
- Redirection or distracting a child
- Removing the child from the source of conflict
- Tailoring the method of discipline to the individual child
- Suggesting appropriate solutions
- Involving the child in problem solving

All of the following means of punishment shall be prohibited:

- Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
- Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her including harness, leash or other restraint device. Strapping devices on confining equipment, such as high chairs used to stabilize the child in that type of chair, cannot be used for punishment or discipline.

[Note: If a child needs to be restrained in an extreme situation to prevent harm to him/her or others, place the child's arms across the chest in a criss-cross position, position yourself behind the child with your arms on top of theirs until they are calm and the situation is safe.]

- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.
- Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities. Examples of this include:
 - Not allowing a child to go outside because of misbehavior during small group time
 - Excluding the child from the entire outdoor period for throwing sand
 - Excluding the child from gym activities for not eating their lunch
- Excluding a child from daily learning experiences. This does **not** include age appropriate discipline techniques, such as:
 - Redirecting a child from the block area after throwing blocks
 - Having a child participate in small group time in a way that benefits the child and doesn't disrupt the group, such as having the child sit a few feet away
 - Using Time-out when appropriate

Use of Time-out. Removing a child from classroom activities is used as a last resort technique for children who are harming themselves or in danger of harming others. It is an opportunity for children to clear their minds and rejoin the group or activity in a more productive state. Time-outs are used only as a last resort to help the child gain a better sense of self-control.

When using Time-out, care giving staff must assure:

- Their expectations of the child's behavior are realistic
- Consequences immediately follow the child's behavior
- Children are not humiliated or made to feel threatened or afraid
- The Time-out does not last longer than it takes for the child to calm down
- Children remain supervised at all times

Behavior Concern Management. If a child has a reoccurring behavior issue that continues after teachers have implemented the positive discipline guidelines above, the following steps will be taken:

- The child's teacher will fill out a Behavior Concern Report and give it to the Site Director.
- The Site Director will evaluate the steps taken by staff to correct the behavior and review all incident reports involving the child to look for patterns or other information that might be useful.
- The Site Director may aid the staff with intervention techniques and will set up a meeting with the child's parent ensuring that they are aware of the problem.
- At the parent conference an intervention plan will be developed. The age of the child, the child's background, the classroom setting, and other extenuating circumstances will be considered.
- In some cases, consultation with health care professionals and/or family services may be required.
- If the above intervention is not successful and the behavior does not improve, the director may remove the child from the program for a period of time, or permanently depending on the circumstance.
- The Site Director may, at any time during this process, decide not to continue care for the child if the safety of the child or other children is compromised or if behavior severely disrupts the daily classroom routine.

Child Biting Intervention. Biting another child should never occur but sometimes children get frustrated and bite other children. We want to be supportive of parents as they teach their children not to bite but at the same time we need to protect other children in our care. A bite that leaves red marks, bruising or broken skin must be reported to both children's parents and an Incident Report must be written. LLPP suggests that a parent seek medical attention for a child if the bite they receive breaks the skin.

If a child bites twice in 2 weeks (14 calendar days), staff members will follow the steps for Behavior Concern Management. Staff also will attempt to identify the reason for biting and apply the following preventions for biting:

- If it is being used for means of communication: help the child find a simple word or hand gesture to substitute for biting.
- If it is being used for attention: spend more one-on-one time with the child to alleviate their need for additional attention-seeking behavior.
- If it is being used for an oral fixation: provide a teething ring loosely attached to their wrist.

Non-Smoking Policy. According to law, smoking is prohibited in the building or on the adjoining grounds at Lakeshore Little People's Place.

Classroom Information

Classroom Ratios. LLPP maintains lower teacher to child ratios than state guidelines whenever possible. The children to teacher state ratios are as follows:

- 3 to 4 years of age is at least 1 caregiver for every 10 children, or each fraction of 10
- 4 to 5 years of age is at least 1 caregiver for every 12 children, or each fraction of 12

Parents may give written parental permission, when developmentally appropriate, that their child is enrolled in the following classrooms if the following conditions are met:

- A three year old classroom if the child has reached 33 months of age (2 years, 9 months)
- A four year old classroom if the child has reached 45 months of age (3 years, 9 months)

Daily Schedule. A typical day may be as follows: arrival/center free choice play, breakfast, clean-up and bathroom breaks, teacher directed circle time, literacy training, small group/math and science activities, large group activities/art & music, outdoor activities, bible story, bathroom, lunch, child lead free choice, literacy training, bathroom, rest time/quiet activities, bathroom, snack/center free choice, teacher led circle time, small group activities, bathroom, outdoor time, clean-up, and child directed activities. For specific times, please refer to your child's classroom schedule.

Curriculum. The High Scope approach uses ACTIVE LEARNING where children are involved in direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas and events. ADULT CHILD INTERACTION involves adults observing and interacting with children at their level to discover how each child thinks and reasons. The LEARNING ENVIRONMENT is arranged in several clearly defined interest areas that enable children to find, use, and return the materials they need in order to explore, invent, and learn about their world. Finally, the DAILY ROUTINE includes a plan-do-review process which gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, make plans, follow through on them and reflect on their experiences with peers and adults.

Zoo-phonics. Zoo-phonics is a curriculum that helps children learn their letters and sounds. Each letter is assigned an animal and body movement. The Zoo-phonics program fully involves the child's eyes, ears, mouth, and body as they learn phonemic awareness and the alphabet. Preschool teachers will incorporate these experiences into their daily lesson plans.

Lesson Plans. Lead teachers, with the help of the assistants, will develop a written lesson plan developed around High Scope Key Developmental Indicators. Teachers will familiarize themselves with High Scope Preschool Curriculum Content including the following 8 areas: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

Observation Records. Teaching teams will use note-taking and checklists to accurately record behaviors and developmental milestones reached by each child as they occur within the classroom setting. These records will be used to guide behavior plans and recall skills when completing an individual child's progress report. Teachers will also use these observations to guide curriculum and lesson planning to increase skill levels in the classroom as a whole.

Progress Reports. LLPP specifically designs its assessments to document a child's progress towards Kindergarten readiness skills. Teachers will document a child's competency in several core areas. Progress reports are completed twice per year for preschool children and are used to individualize each child's specific needs, monitor a child's progress, and evaluate teaching effectiveness. Teachers will share results with parents during parent/teacher conferences.

Screening Tool. LLPP uses Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) for its developmental and social-emotional screening tool for children from one month until they enter Kindergarten. Highly reliable and valid, ASQ-3 indicates differing levels of development, educates parents about developmental milestones and incorporates parents' expert knowledge about their child. Parents will complete the Ages and Stages and teachers will evaluate results and use the information to guide lesson plans. If a delay is indicated by the assessment, teachers will notify the Site Director who will work with the teachers and parents to develop a plan to address the delay including referrals for available resources. If the parent has already completed this with a health care provider or other professional, a copy of the form can be submitted to their child's teacher. Parents can also complete their own assessment of their child by logging onto www.greatstartshere.org and selecting the Ages and Stages box on the left. If the child meets criteria for a delay, the parent will be contacted with available services.

Conferences. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss the child's progress at any time by requesting a meeting with their child's teacher. Teachers will also keep parents updated on a regular basis of their child's progress. For preschool age children, conferences will be held twice a year to discuss their child's developmental progress.

Program Quality Assessment. The preschool Program Quality Assessment (PQA) is a rating instrument designed to evaluate the quality of early childhood programs. It evaluates program quality in areas of: learning environment, daily routine, adult-child interaction, curriculum planning and assessment, parent involvement and family services, staff qualifications and development and program management. Teaching teams use this assessment to evaluate the classroom and develop a Quality Improvement Plan. This tool is also used as part of Great Start to Quality, which is a State of Michigan Initiative that will rate the quality of our programs based on the results of this assessment.

Classroom Newsletters. Classroom newsletters are written by the classroom teachers. The newsletter reviews events and reminds families of upcoming activities and items they may need to bring from home.

Use of Media in the Classroom. Teachers are asked to use movies and media to support academic instruction and should not use media for entertainment purposes, unless used as a focused reward for the students with the approval of the director. Movies, books and computer games need to be age appropriate with a "G" rating. A maximum of two hours per week of media is acceptable but must be part of a written lesson plan. The classroom lights must remain on and an alternative activity must be provided for children who do not wish to participate in watching the video or DVD. Media means the use of electronic devices with a screen, including but not limited to, televisions, computers, tablets, cameras and electric game consoles.

Use of Photos. LLPP uses photos of children for many purposes. They may be used for a special project / craft, identification of personal belongings, classroom/hallway decorations or LLPP publicity. Parents may request in writing to their Site Director that their child not be photographed for one or all of the mentioned purposes.

Clothing. Children should wear clothes which are comfortable and easy to fasten. Rubber-soled shoes are recommended. An extra set of clothing should be placed in the child's cubby for spills or accidents which may occur. Please label all clothing, including coats, with your child's name. Warm outerwear including boots, caps, snow-pants, and mittens are needed on cold days. All belongings should be kept in a labeled bag.

Toys from Home. If a toy is brought from home for use in the classroom, it may be shared with other children. LLPP cannot be responsible for lost or broken items. Guns, war toys, and other toy weapons are prohibited. Be sure your child's name is on any toys from home. We encourage you to leave toys at home.

Field Trips. Occasionally, classroom teachers plan class trips. Field Trips are meant to be fun, learning experiences. When taking children off-site on field trips or even stroller rides, the book containing classroom Child Information Record (emergency cards), cell phones, and First Aid kit are taken. All field trips must be pre-approved by the Site Director. Parents will receive written notice of all field trips and written permission must be given before a child is allowed to attend a field trip. All vehicles must meet state licensing transportation standards, and drivers must hold a chauffeur's license and meet state licensing standards.

Food. LLPP will provide a snack schedule and parents can sign up to bring in a snack that meets the USDA guidelines. If your child has special dietary needs, please inform your child's teacher so that special accommodations can be made. LLPP is a peanut and tree nut free environment. Meal-time can be a social learning time where children are encouraged to try new foods. Good table manners and eating habits are encouraged. All parents must complete the Parent Providing Food Agreement included in the enrollment pack.

Special Occasions and Food Service. As a licensed childcare facility, we are required to follow strict guidelines for food service. In the instance of special occasion days, such as birthdays and holidays, we ask that "treats" are limited to non-food items. If a classroom wishes to incorporate special snacks into the celebrations, a parent sign-up for food items, approved by the director, will be provided. If a food item is brought as a treat, it should be individually wrapped and it will be sent home with the children so that the parent can choose whether to give it to the child and determine any potential allergic reactions.

Employee and Volunteer Requirements

Employee Screening Policy. The following steps will be taken by the Site Director to ensure that all staff members are of responsible character and suitable to meet the needs of children as stated in R4000.5104 of the Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers:

- Site Directors will have written record of three or more references
- Staff must sign a written acknowledgment of the following:
 - That they are of responsible character, have not been convicted of a crime, and will report upon being investigated or convicted of a crime
 - That they have received a copy of the Michigan Child Protection laws excerpted by the Department of Human Services and understand its contents including mandating requirements, definitions and indicators of abuse/neglect
 - That they will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by parent, staff, or other to the proper authorities
 - Sign a statement that they have never been named in a central registry case, are the perpetrator of a child abuse or child neglect, nor have been investigated for abuse or neglect
- A State Police Clearance Form must be completed by applicants, and checked through the state website. All directors will be required to complete fingerprint registry. This clearance will be repeated for each employee on a yearly basis.
- Children's Protective Service Clearance Form will be completed and kept on file. This clearance will be repeated for each employee every two years.
- LLPP reserves the right to require drug/alcohol screening of any employee at any time during employment.

Employee Training Policy. All employees must comply with training requirements mandated by state, federal or local agencies. All employees will complete an orientation process before unsupervised contact with children.

All employees must read and sign the Employee Acknowledgement stating that they have read and understood all the policies of the center as stated in the Employee and Parent Handbooks, Classroom Handbook, Crisis Intervention Plan and Health Care Service Plan. All employees must familiarize themselves with the State Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers.

All employees must complete 24 hours of annual training in child development, curriculum, child discipline, health/safety, nutrition, working with parents and licensing rules for childcare centers. All staff must also complete training on child abuse/neglect and cultural competency/inclusions. Staff working with infants and toddlers must have training about safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome. All employees are required to have current First Aid, CPR and Blood Borne Pathogen training.

All lead teachers, assistant teachers and teacher aids will meet requirements set by the Office of Child and Adult Licensing. Each classroom is also required to have a lead teacher that meets educational requirements in child development or a related field.

Teacher Evaluations. Parents are given the opportunity to evaluate classroom functioning and teacher performance in the Fall and Spring. The Site Director will use these evaluations to set improvement goals for the classrooms and provide feedback to individual teachers on their performance. The Site Director will also see written feedback from co-workers regarding an employee's performance. These feedback forms are designed for the use of the Site Director only and are destroyed after the information is used to assist in the Site Director's written evaluation of the employee. The Site Director will meet with the employee annually to give feedback and assist employees in creating goals for the upcoming year.

Outside Employment. LLPP is not liable for any employee aside from the time in which they are actually working for LLPP. An employee who is hired for private duty by a parent of a child enrolled in the program is not a representative of LLPP during that time. This includes but is not limited to: babysitting, serving as a nanny, house sitting/cleaning, transporting children, or any other services for which they are paid by any source other than LLPP.

Volunteers. Volunteers provide a wonderful service in the classroom as they lend their time, energy and compassion toward the children. It is important to keep in mind that ultimately the children are the responsibility of the employees. Staff members will ALWAYS have a "line-of-sight" observation of the volunteer.

All volunteers must be approved by the Site Director. If the volunteer will be in contact with the children at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks, they must provide documentation confirming a negative TB test. All volunteers must complete a State Police Clearance Form and a Children's Protective Service Clearance Form. Volunteers under eighteen years of age must provide references from an educator or other unrelated adult qualified to give a reference. All volunteers will complete a Volunteer Agreement and agree to:

- Sign a statement that they are of responsible character, have not been convicted of a crime and will report upon being investigated or convicted of a crime
- Sign a statement that they have received a copy of the Michigan Child Protection laws excerpted by the Department of Human Services and understand its contents including mandating requirements, definitions and indicators of abuse/neglect
- Sign a statement that they will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by parent, staff or other to the proper authorities
- Sign a statement that they have never been named in a central registry case, are the perpetrator of a child abuse, or child neglect nor have been investigated for abuse or neglect
- Review Policies and Procedures of LLPP
- Maintain parent/worker confidentiality, including not disclosing full names of any children in reports or other class work
- Follow direction given by the classroom teacher and Site Director

Furthermore, it is agreed that a volunteer at Lakeshore Little People's Place **WILL NOT:**

- Be left alone in a classroom with children or accompany children to the bathroom
- Have access to receipt books or payment boxes
- Have access to staff personnel or child records
- Be counted in determining staffing to child ratios

Classroom Visitors. Any classroom visitor, volunteer, or guest speaker must be pre-approved by the Site Director and check in with the office when they arrive.

Parent Involvement and Resources

Procedures Related to Concerns. Lakeshore Little People's Place strives to provide a positive environment for all, however at times concerns may arise. If you have any concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Site Director who will complete a concern resolution and follow-up form. If you are unable to resolve your concerns through the Site Director, the Executive Director may be contacted. If you have concerns regarding a policy or procedure you can contact the Executive Director who will bring your concern to the board of directors. If you feel that LLPP is in violation of a licensing regulation, reports may be made to the Department of Human Services: Office of Children and Adult Licensing. A copy of the regulations is available on the parent table.

Parent Involvement. Lakeshore Little People's Place welcomes your family into our community and invites you to become active partners with us as we teach and care for your child. When parents and teachers join in partnership an optimum learning environment can be created. LLPP has an open door policy with all parents and we invite you to drop in anytime. We seek to encourage parents to participate in the education of their child inside and outside the classroom. Here are some ways you can get involved:

- Having informal day-to-day conversations with teachers
- Communicating with your child's teacher through email, phone and notes
- Attending formal parent teacher conferences
- Participating in developmental discussions regarding your child by request or invitation
- Volunteering within the classroom
- Reading your child's lesson plans, monthly newsletters and Parent Board information
- Participating in special events for parents and families
- Reinforcing lesson plan activities at home
- Participating in program evaluations and giving input on policy and procedure
- Sharing ideas or items related to your culture that can be shared in the classroom

Parent Resources. A list of family health related resources is available in the Health Care Services Plan. A book of more detailed and widespread resources is also available on the parent table. Health related information regarding specific communicable illnesses/diseases is also available in the Site Director's office.

Whole Family Connection. Whole Family Connection is a web-based initiative designed to give families throughout the United States free, anonymous and better access to community services for children and families to help them live healthier and more fulfilling lives. Using online profiles, Whole Family Connection identifies and matches families' needs with service providers in Ottawa County who can help them in areas such as education, health, social well-being, spiritual well-being, environment safety and economics. To access this site and set up your profile visit: www.wholefamilyconnectionottawa.com.

2-1-1. If you need immediate assistance or wish to speak with someone about your needs, dial 2-1-1 which is an access point for persons needing health and human service programs. Please also feel free to ask your Site Director for assistance in finding available services for your family.

Parenting Education Opportunities. Opportunities for parenting education will be highlighted in the Director's monthly newsletters, displayed on the parent boards or distributed through your child's mailbox. Education opportunities may include: speakers, playgroups, parenting articles, seminars and special community events.

Fundraising Opportunities. Lakeshore Little People's Place is a non-profit organization and relies on fundraising to provide extra income for the center. If you would like to share fundraising ideas or would like to help coordinate a center fundraising event, please see your center director. Here are ways you can get involved:

- Box Tops for Education: Bring in your Box Top Labels from General Mills products and we will receive ten cents for each one to buy supplies for the centers.
- Bottles for Books: Bring in your empty returnable pop can bottles and we will return them and use the money for the purchase of classroom books.